

Identification:

Originator: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources_Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation

Title: 2015-2025 WWAP Dataset: Conservation Opportunity Areas information. (May also be called COA information or COA data)

Last updated: 30 June 2008

Description: COAs are places on the landscape that contain significant ecological features, natural communities or SGCN habitat for which Wisconsin has a responsibility for protecting and conserving when viewed from a global, continental, upper Midwest regional or state perspective. They are some of the best places in our state to implement the conservation actions described in the WWAP.

Associated Data Sets: Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and Species with Information Needs; SGCN-NC association scores; SGCN-ecological landscapes association scores; Natural community-ecological landscapes association scores.

Process: Teams of WDNR ecologists and biologists in each region identified 213 terrestrial and aquatic conservation opportunity areas based on whether: high priority Natural Community and/or species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) are present; it is a Wisconsin conservation responsibility; representative and significant ecological features are present; it is named as a priority conservation site in other initiatives or plans; it contributes to an interconnected habitat network; and whether it contributes to large, minimally-fragmented, ecologically functioning systems. Maps, aerial photos, conservation plans, Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) data, on-the-ground information and local knowledge are sources. Conservation Opportunity Areas are mapped by ecological landscape and by county. Conservation Opportunity Areas were originally published in *IMPLEMENTATION: Priority Conservation Actions & Conservation Opportunity Areas* (2008) and republished in the revised 2015-2025 Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan.

First publication_date: 30 June 2008

Most recent publication_date: 11 November 2016

Completeness: COAs boundaries are fuzzy; most have not been field verified. COAs are heavily skewed to public lands and terrestrial sites. Identifying COAs is generally an informed qualitative process. It is generally accepted that identification and mapping of COAs is incomplete, but existing COAs are valid. Natural communities listed in the General-COA-Description field are the same for all COAs in the same Ecological-Feature-Group field with some minor adjustments based on staff expertise.

Maintenance and update frequency:

Key word_theme: WWAP
Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan
COA
conservation opportunity areas

Key word_place: Wisconsin

Column or field label information: Confirmed-Probable_SGCNs updated annually. Updates to all other fields, COA boundaries or identification of COAs is undetermined.

COA: Name of the COA

COA-Num: Unique numeric or alphanumeric ID for the COA presented as XX.XX for each of 213 terrestrial and aquatic COAs. Digits to the left of the decimal correspond to LandCode: Unique numeric code from 1 to 16 for each of 16 ecological landscapes established by the Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation. Digits to the right of the decimal are assigned sequentially to each COA in the particular ecological landscape. U=unmapped, applicable to large and/or diffuse areas. A=aquatic. Lower case designations are added to COAs that are geographically contiguous, but have distinct biological or ecological characteristics from other COAs with the same ID.

Ecological-Feature-Group: A biologically, ecologically and geographically distinct landscape recognized for its statewide, regional, continental or global significance to biodiversity and natural communicates.

Ecological-Feature-Significance: Scale of relevance for the ecological feature group - global, continental, regional or state.

General-COA-Description: Natural community-based description.

Confirmed-Probable_SGCNs: WWAP2 SGCNs that intersect within one mile of a COA boundary and the WWAP2 SGCNs that were identified in 2008.

Public-Areas: County, state and federal lands that intersect within one mile of a COA boundary; may include some properties that are in fact, privately owned with public easements.

Important-Bird-Areas: Important bird areas that intersect within one mile of a COA boundary. IBAs provide essential habitat to one or more species of breeding or non-breeding birds.

<http://www.wisconsinbirds.org/iba/overview.htm>

Land-Legacy-Sites: Land Legacy Sites that intersect within one mile of a COA boundary. Land legacy sites identify places critical to meet conservation and outdoor recreation needs.

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/landlegacy/>

Contact Information:

State (Wisconsin) Wildlife Action Plan coordinator
DNRwwap@wisconsin.gov